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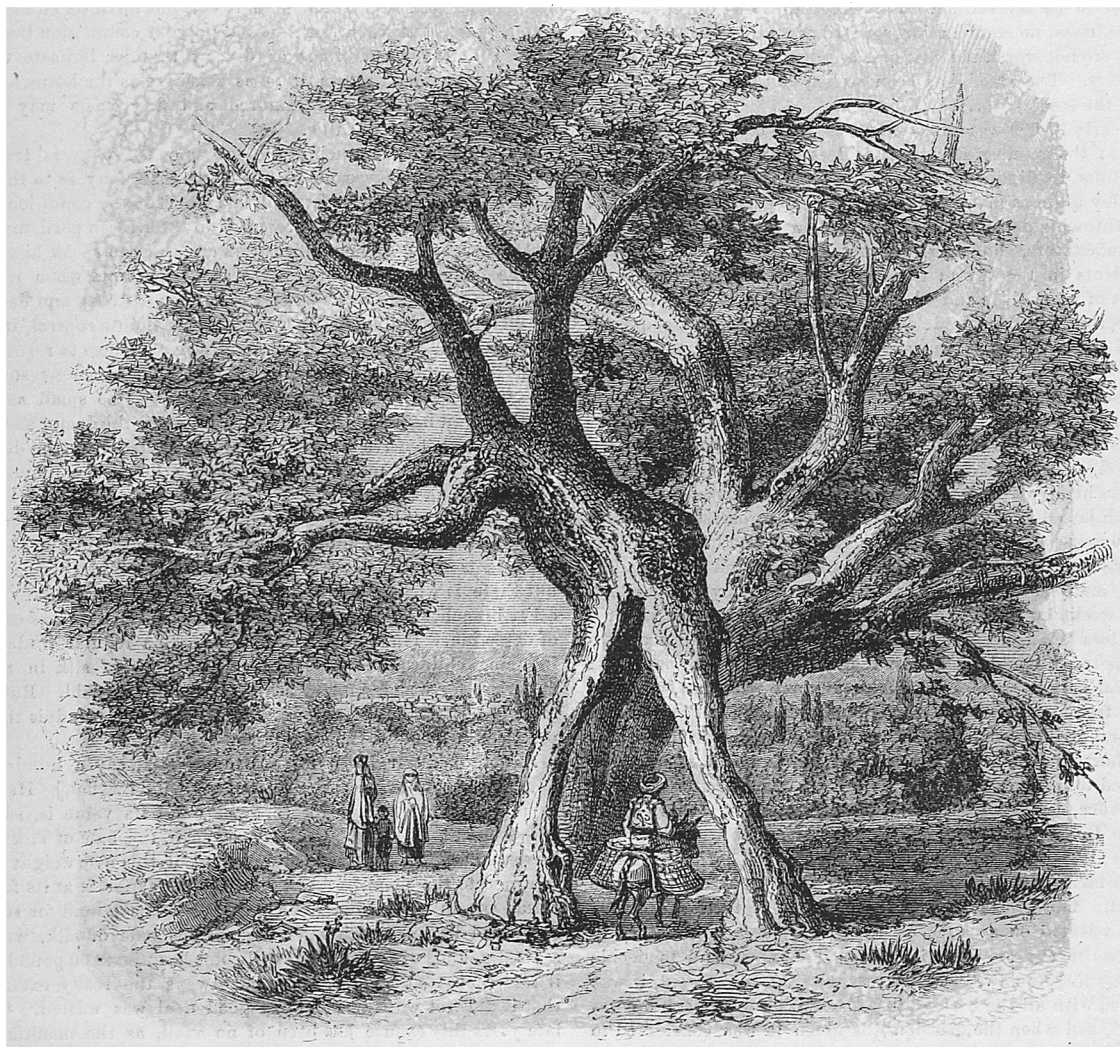
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REMARKABLE TREES.

A desolate place indeed would the world appear, if its population ever increased enough to sanction the presence of the husbandman, accompanied by all the modern improvements in agriculture, on those spots rendered grand by trees whose age and stature so enchant mankind, but whose over-spreading boughs are proclaimed inimical to the growth of the staff of life! We will hope, however, that the price of the cheap loaf will never require to be maintained by the introduction of the woodman's axe into places whose traditions are solely about their trees, whose picturesque scenery depends

places in which, through summer days, to feast on reverie—that reverie whence spring their most sublime productions, and which assumes at no time more fanciful, more picturesque, more profound, or more true tones, than when they are gazing on some magnificent distant view, which, deprived of trees, would be a desert. Promise me this, and I will tell you—but no, I will not impose any conditions on you; for whether you promise me or not, I will still relate to you the peculiarities of two remarkable trees, as they will, perhaps, cause you, at least, to respect, if not to admire, the stately and



PLAINTAIN, NEAR SMYRNA.

on their existence, and whose inviting shade and various associations assemble beneath their branches the lovers alike of poetry and of romance. Approach not such places, you model-farmers, who prefer the sight of acres laid out by rule and line to that of nature's wild and beautiful devices. Back! you manufacturers, who delight in the smoky volumes that issue from a factory chimney, but who see nothing to admire in the leafy intertwinings of the stately forest tree. Leave, I say, the poet and the painter undisturbed in their possessions, and let not the scenes which inspire them become, like cold and snow in English winters, things of former times. Let them still have views containing trees to sketch, and shady

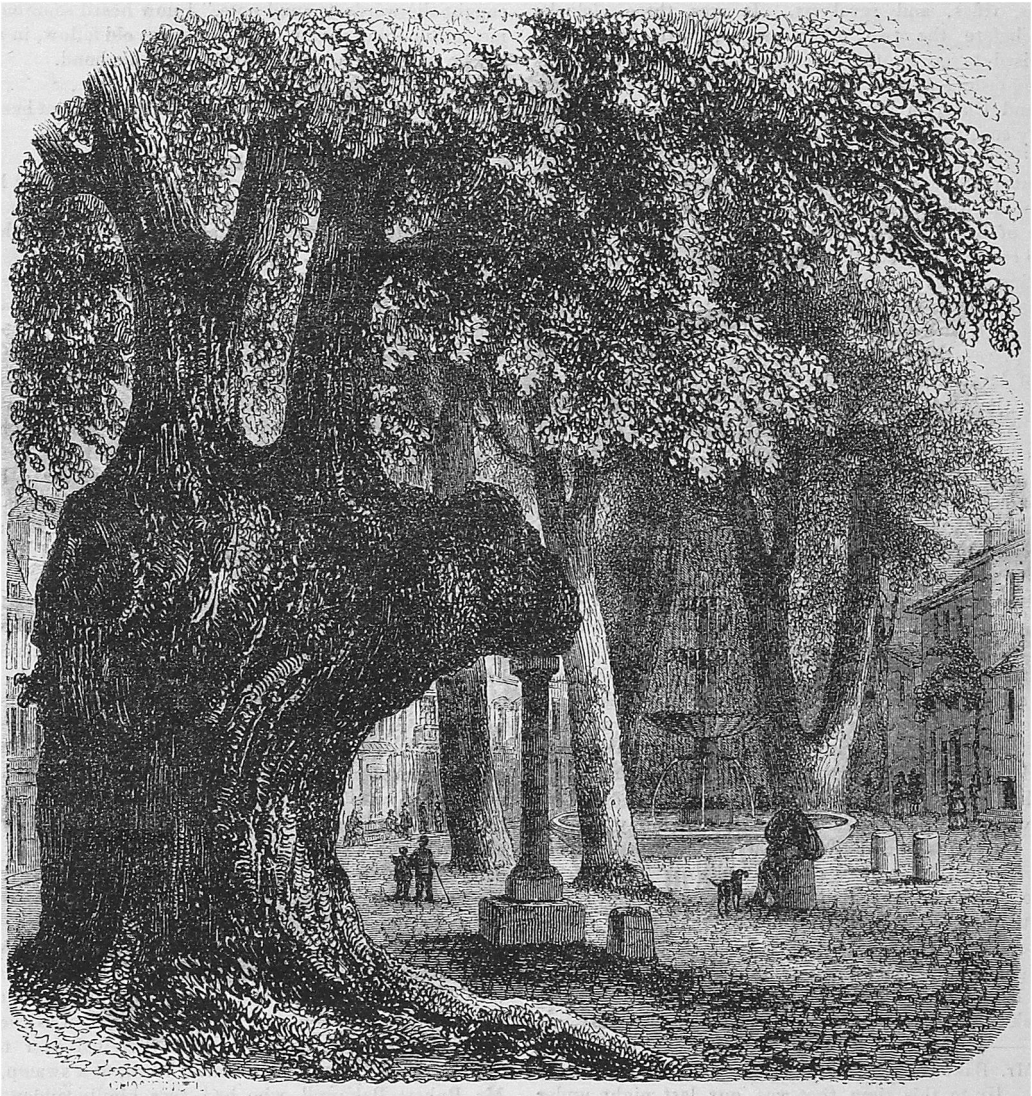
romantic forms which nature alone knows how to assume so well.

Smyrna, which is one of the largest cities on the Asiatic coast, is situated at the head of a delightful bay surrounded by lofty mountains. A vast plain stretches from the eastern limits of the city to the hills situated in the opposite direction to the sea: these hills are lofty, and are covered with opulent villages; while the plain itself, which is extremely fertile, is watered by the Meles, a sparkling river which washes the walls of Smyrna; poplars, cypresses, plantains, as well as all kinds of vegetables, grow here in great abundance.

Towards the middle of the plain, at the side of the road

which leads from Smyrna to Bournabat (a village where a grotto is shown, in which it has been thought, from the remotest times, that Homer wrote the *Iliad*), is seen an old plantain, remarkable for its size, and still more so for its singular form and picturesque appearance; its trunk is divided into two strong parts, which, in spite of this division, have but one head between them; these two stems, as they join at a considerable height from the ground, form a sort of arch, through which the inhabitants of the village frequently pass as they go to Bournabat, where the country-houses of the rich merchants are situated. The tree does not rise exactly in

to be seen at Brignolles, in the department of Var, in France. The river of Carami runs outside the walls of Brignolles. According to tradition, it flowed, five or six centuries ago, over the very place which, at present, bears its name; and the remarkable elm which is given in our engraving was among the trees which graced its banks. This elm had already become, in the fifteenth century, one of the curiosities of Brignolles. Michel de l'Hopital celebrated its rare proportions in the writings which he composed during his exile in Provence, in the first half of the sixteenth century. On the 25th of October, 1564, Charles IX., who was stopping at a



ELM AT BRIGNOLLES

the middle of the road, for it would there impede the progress of the vehicles, which are too large to pass between its two stems; but foot-passengers, and very often people on horseback, follow a path which runs parallel with, and is contiguous to, the road, and which passes under this vegetable archway. On approaching the city, a view is obtained of the cemeteries, which are, after those of Pera and Scutari, the most remarkable throughout the East, both by the number and the beauty of their venerable cypresses, in the midst of which the numerous and richly-sculptured tombs of the inhabitants of Smyrna rise in the most picturesque irregularity.

The other tree we wish to speak about is an elm, which is

house opposite the elm, was much delighted by beholding a ball given under its spreading boughs, where the volte and the martingale were danced in a right gallant manner. Time, which endangers all things, rendered it, however, at last, necessary to prop up this venerable patriarch of the trees of Var; and it is at present supported by a wooden pillar about seven feet and a half high. It is said that the hollow sides of its old trunk have served more than once as a dwelling-house for poor people. But this vegetable retreat is now protected from the weather by a wall of stones and cement; and it is only since it has been repaired like an old house, that the tree no longer serves to shelter any one.